



Indiana Regional Works Council Reports

Executive Summary - November 2013

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Understanding employers' needs. Many Works Councils discussed in their reports how critical it is to engage employers in the region to understand what types of skills are in demand. Some regions have already conducted extensive surveys or interview sessions, some intend to hold "listening sessions" in the coming months with key employers, and as one region stated as a next step: "Create a more systematic communication and partnership with key industry sectors and our educational community and make sure that our community buys into our new "plan A." Consider how the Works Council can take a lead in ensuring these partnerships happen."

Creating more awareness about CTE opportunities in our schools. Many Works Councils articulated the importance of ensuring students understand the career opportunities available through career and technical education. One Works Council stated the issue for advanced manufacturing clearly, saying: "For several years, school corporations have been directed to produce students that are focused on a post-secondary education with an emphasis that does not point to manufacturing."

Strategies include:

- Communicating the vision about the value of a CTE education to all stakeholders, especially parents.
- Developing better guidance tools to students on what CTE programs are available and the career pathways to which they lead.
- Providing staff development for guidance counselors about CTE programs and pathways.

Building employability skills into curriculum. Many Works Councils referenced the reality that many students are graduating without the employability (soft) skills necessary to be successful on the job. Most are interested in finding ways to embed these skills into CTE curriculum. Some suggested using existing assessments and training tools like the National Career Readiness Certificate or WIN software. One Works Council suggested using a work ethic certification model that was used in the past under the Department of Workforce Development.

Examine how well math requirements in Core 40 Diploma aligns with industry needs. Some math requirements for the Core 40 diploma may not align as well with industry needs. The Region 7 Works Council is interested in ensuring that foundational math skills for students are well developed and contextualized to meet industry needs.

Innovative Curricula. Many works councils expressed that their respective regions that they wanted to explore more deeply the innovative curriculum models that exist in CTE. Some councils talked about statewide projects like Project Lead the Way or HIRE Technology through Conexus. Others talked about regional innovations like process engineering, energy, or advanced manufacturing curriculum. All of the Works Councils articulated a desire to dig more deeply into regional offerings to determine what types of additional curriculum offerings they may want to give.